

REMARKS

Claims 36-55 remain in the application including independent claims 36, 39, 41, and 49. New dependent claims 56-73 have been added.

The specification has been amended to overcome the examiner's objections. The claims have been amended to overcome the 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, rejections.

Claims 35-55 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Research Disclosure 39916 in view of Gagnon '392. Claim 35 includes the feature of a plurality of deflectable mounting structures with associated eight sensor assemblies having a strain gage mounted on the corresponding deflectable mounting structure. Claim 41 is directed toward a weight sensor for a vehicle seat with sensors having a mounting portion for attachment to a seat and a deflectable portion that deflects in response to a weight force.

Neither Gagnon nor the Research Disclosure discloses the use of a deflectable mounting structure for supporting a sensor as claimed by Applicant. The Research Disclosure simply teaches the use of load cells positioned between a seat frame and a seat track. There is no disclosure of how these load cells are supported or mounted to the associated structures. Gagnon also does not teach the use of deflectable mounting structures for supporting sensors positioned between a seat frame or seat bottom and a seat track. Thus, the combination of the Research Disclosure and Gagnon does not disclose, suggest, or teach all of the features claimed by Applicant. For similar reasons claims 39 and 49 are also allowable.

Further, several of the dependent claims are not taught or disclosed by the Research Disclosure and Gagnon. For example, claim 42 includes the feature of a strain

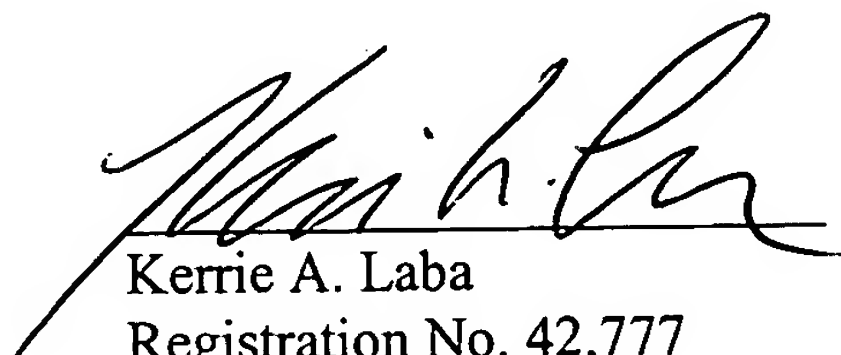
gage mounted to the deflectable portion. As admitted by the Examiner, the Research Disclosure does not teach the use of a strain gage for measuring seat occupant weight. Further, as discussed above, the Research Disclosure does not disclose a deflectable mounting portion for supporting a strain gage. Gagnon indicates that strain gages can be used but does not disclose, suggest, or teach the mounting of a strain gage to a deflectable portion of a sensor assembly that also includes a mounting portion for attachment to a seat structure.

Claim 43 includes the feature of at least one strain gage comprising a plurality of strain gages mounted in a predetermined spaced relationship to each other on the deflectable portion. Gagnon indicates that strain gages can be used but does not disclose, suggest, or teach the mounting of a multiple strain gages on each deflectable portion of a sensor assembly.

Claim 45 further defines the sensors as each including a support portion mounted to a vehicle seat track member such that the deflectable portion is positioned between the mounting and support portions. As discussed above, the Research Disclosure does not teach any type of mounting configuration for a sensor assembly positioned between a seat track and a seat frame. The Research Disclosure certainly does not disclose, suggest, or teach a sensor having a first portion mounted to a seat frame and a second portion mounted to a seat track with a deflectable portion between the first and second portions. Gagnon also does not teach this feature. Further, Gagnon also does not disclose, suggest, or teach mounting a strain gage on a deflectable portion of a sensor assembly where the deflectable portion is positioned between a mounting portion attached to the seat pan and a support portion attached to the seat track as claimed by Applicant.

Applicant believes that all claims are allowable over the cited references. A check is enclosed to cover the cost of the additional claims. It is believed that no additional fees are due, however, the Commissioner is authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 50-1482, in the name of Carlson, Gaskey & Olds, for any additional fees or credit the account for any overpayment.

Respectfully submitted,

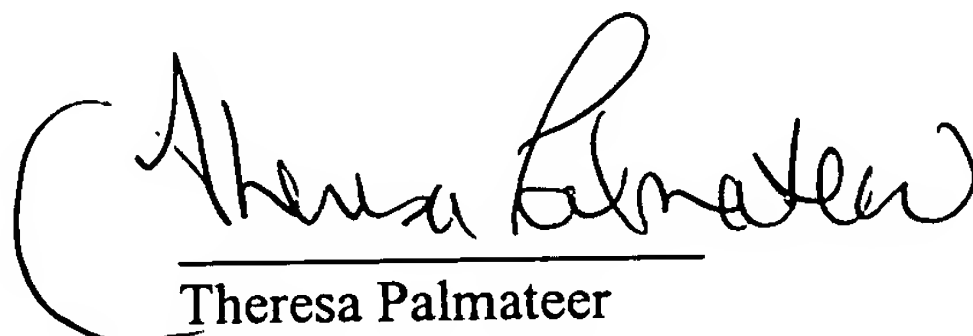


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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that the enclosed Amendment is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first-class mail, postage prepaid, in an envelope addressed to Assistant Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks, Washington, D.C. 20231, on this 10th day of January, 2003.



Theresa Palmateer